

THE PRIVATE JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH CROSBY SOCIETY.

THE BRITISH CROSBY SOCIETY

Hon. President.....BING CROSBY.
Hon. Vice-President.....LARRY CROSBY.

<u>Active President:-</u>	<u>Vice-President:-</u>	<u>Discologist:-</u>
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HONORARY MEMBERS INCLUDE--

TED RAY, JACK BUCKANAN, J. K. WILSON, a n d NORMAN WISDOM .

A FEW WORDS FROM FRANK-

Hello Members - Before saying anything at all I must first apologise to those of you who look forward so much to Colin's Record Reviews each "Post". Because owing to my miscalculations the number of pages required in our last issue, the printer had to return Colin's Reviews as there wasn't sufficient space left to include them. To make up for this, Dot and I have decided to issue this special Edition, with the accent mainly on Colin's Record Reviews.

CLUB RAFFLE. In an effort to boost our Club Funds, we have decided to have a Raffle. We are offering three valuable prizes and we hope you will give your wholehearted support to this project. The Prizes are-

1st PRIZE - A 12" L.P. Complete Bing Crosby Radio Show on which Bing sings 9 songs including, "Never Before", "Down Yonder", and "Because of You".

one 2nd PRIZE - A 550 Page Library containing four complete stories, of which is a condensed version of Bing's Own Story, "Call me Lucky" which takes up 68 pages of this wonderful Book, and contains some terrific sketches of Bing.

3rd PRIZE - Private recording of "Amor Amor" and "It Could happen to You", on which Bing is accompanied by Tommy Dorsey's Orchestra.
a 10" 78 RPM.

TICKETS COST 1/- EACH. Send your application for tickets to me (Frank), by Postal Orders which should be uncrossed and made payable to:- Frank Murphy - Nothing else should be written on the orders. Please enclose a S.A.E., in which I will return your half of the tickets. The other halves will be sent to Dot, who when she has drawn the names of the three lucky numbers, will inform me so that their prizes can be sent to them. The result and the winning members' names will be published in our next issue.

We send our grateful thanks to member, Ted Laker, and our Discologist, Colin Pugh for helping us sponsor the above raffle.

The closing date of the Raffle is ten days from the date you receive your copy of this edition.

In closing "these few words" I would just like to say that now with the holiday period starting and for many of us this means spending two wonderful weeks in absolutely new surroundings. You may find that your two weeks might bring you near to where I live, if they do you'll be very welcome to drop in to see my wife and I - we'll be very pleased to see you -

All the very best - FRANK.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT - We acknowledge and thank sincerely the following members for the following donations to Club Funds.-

Mrs. E. Proctor - 13/6; John Harris - 2/6d; and Brian Jones - 8/6d.

The Fourth Instalment of "My Four Sons and Me", will appear in our next edition.

PART 1. THE CROSBY WAXWORKS. By Colin Pugh.

The much heralded, eagerly awaited issue of the Bing Crosby Musical Autobiography has at last materialised. This Work comprises five 12 inch L.P. records and the full official title is: Bing - A Musical Autobiography of Bing Crosby. The issue numbers are: Lat 8051; 8052; 8053; 8054; 8055, and if purchased now may be had in album form. As a matter of fact the records will not be sold singly until all the complete albums are sold. Thereafter no more albums will be made and only the single records will be available. In addition to the five neatly housed records is a 24-paged booklet giving a brief outline of Bing's life, many fine photos taken at recording sessions, and a discography of Bing's recordings on Brunswick (1931 to 1954) including recording dates. To review the 89 songs contained in the album would require a large book to itself, so it is sufficient to say that Bing does an introduction to each song, and the Buddy Cole Trio, as well as providing the accompaniment to Bing on all the earlier songs, also supplies the musical continuity. The price of the records is 34/8d each and no extra is charged for its present album form. To save a lot of space in our "Crosby Post" I will not list the 89 songs, but your local record dealer has the complete list which he would not mind you copying down if you wish.

In addition to the automatic issue on 45's of all our current 78's two earlier Brunswick 78's have now been made available on 45's. They are 03384 "White Christmas"/"Let's Start the New Year Right"; and 03929 "Silent Night", Holy Night"/"Adeste Fideles".

Next we have a 78 and 45 release on Brunswick of two very nice songs. The issue Number is 05377 and the first side made its appearance in the hot parade here just recently - "I Love Paris" from "Can Can". A number by Cole Porter and with the ever popular support of John Scott Trotters Orchestra, Bing gives us an excellent rendering of this popular song. The Matrix Number is L7513 and it was recorded on 31st December 1953 on the Flip side we have "The Song from Desiree", and although I feel that most will favour the first side. I am more impressed with this one. I see the label credits Alfred Newman and his Orchestra with the Jud Conlon Choir as Bing's support. And his and well expressed rendition of this somewhat unusual tune makes for some first class listening. The Matrix Number of this side is L7934.

It may interest you to know that so many records are being issued today that the Decca Company (who press Brunswick) have decided to make a weekly release instead of monthly as in the past. At time of writing this an advised issue of 05385 "Tobormory Bay"/"The River" (Sciummo). No accompaniment is mentioned but there is a remark to the effect that "Gary's father comes up with a wonderfully smooth version of an old favourite".

The only other issue here is another extended play on Brunswick - OE9009. Entitled "Some Fine Old Chestnuts" Volume One, this is merely half of the full L.P. of that same title and the songs are: "Do you Ever Think of Me"; "I Never Knew"; "Somebody Loves Me"; "After You've Gone".

The Australians who are usually later than us with their Crosby issues have beaten us to it this time with their Columbia release - DO 70131 "In The Good Old Summertime"/"Oh Tell Me Why".

I made a mention in the last issue of a possibility of a splendid L.P. Series of early Crosby Songs on Brunswick, the first of which I listed under the title of "Bing Crosby Collectors Classics". I now learn that a continuance of this series is highly probable, there being 8 L.P. Volumes in the States bearing this title. This will give us a fine selection of these early waxings at L.P. quality.

For several months now I have been hoping for sufficient space to deal briefly with a matter immediately connected with the collecting of records, and that is their reproduction. To deal with this at length through the various stages, could fill several books, but that is not my intention. I am only concerned here with the first stage - the pick-up itself, this being the most important unit as far as the record is concerned. Your records are your collection and their care and long life should be your first consideration - yes, even before the quality of their reproduction. High fidelity amplifiers and expensive speaker set-ups can always come later if necessary but your pick-up should be given first and immediate consideration. A poor amplifier and a cheap speaker may not sound very nice but at least they cannot harm your records. But the wrong pick-up will. I am going to stick my neck out by giving some straight-from-the-shoulder advice, advice which I am well aware may not be sympathetically received by many who will read it. Firstly, the gramophone unit. If you are considering changing your present one or buying a new one, then don't go in for an autochange unit, or even an autostop unit or any where the pick-up is connected to a mechanism to start

or stop the turntable. This may come as a bit of a shock to those who have just purchased or who are contemplating buying one of those super auto-radiograms we see in the shops, but believe me, the big collectors wouldn't be found dead with one. By big collectors I am not necessarily referring to Crosby collectors alone but also to collectors of serious music. Take the largest record collection in the world, that of the B.B.C. No auto-changers find their way into their establishments. It would not be fair for me to mention names, but the fellows concerned will know to whom I am referring, when I say that I have sent to more than one, a dubbing which played from the label to the outer edge. (Not one made by myself) and they were unable to play it because of their autochange or autostop equipment. A good three speed motor and turntable with an on/off switch is all that is required or desired. The pick-up now should be independent and whilst everyone will advise it should be lightweight or featherweight, this is usually where the advice ends. The intending purchaser arrives at his shop where he is either shown the type of which they have a large stock and naturally wish to push, or else he is shown such an assortment of different types and makes that he doesn't know what to choose. I will go a step further and recommend an actual make and type in which you will not be disappointed. If Cash has to be the first consideration then I can recommend an Acos G.P. 30 Pick-up. This is made by Cosmocord Ltd., It is a crystal pick-up with what is called a turn-over head. This means you turn a little knob on the front to select the sapphire needle required according to whether you wish to play a 78 or L.P. Record. The current price including Purchase-Tax of this excellent Pick-up is £3.6.2. If you can run to a little more cash to be both kind to your records and to get the best from them, then I can thoroughly recommend the Acos G.P.20 made by the same firm. This world-famous Pick-up has interchangeable slide-on heads, one for standard and one for L.P. The price complete with one head is £3.8.8. and spare heads (either standard or L.P.) are £2.2.3. Each. Most people start off with the standard (78) R.P.M. Head and buy the L.P. Head later on thereby spreading the cost over a period.

I am not decrying the qualities of other Pick-ups for there are other makes costing in some cases much more, but for a Pick-up which will be kind to your records, give all the quality any average person can desire, and be reasonable on the pocket, then the two I have mentioned above cannot be beaten. If you have any difficulty in obtaining either of these Pick-ups at your local shop send me your remittance and I will post you whichever you choose by return.

PART 2 OF COLIN'S RECORD REVIEWS APPEARS AT THE END OF THIS ISSUE.

"GUESS THE DATE".

The Winner of the "Guess the Date" Competition sponsored by Johnny Joyce in our December issue, is Brian Jones of Pengam, Mon. Brian has received a single-sides L.P. on which Bing sings three songs from "Road to Bali". We send our congratulations to Brian for his success, and our sincere thanks to Johnny for this grand gesture.

STOP PRESS.

MEMBERS

Did you vote for Bing in the recent Melody Making Poll? Have you wrote in to the B.B.C. Radio Luxemburg, or A.F.N. asking them to play your favourite "Bing" Record? Are you doing your bit to help keep Bing's name in the limelight, or have you wrote that letter to your favourite Musical Weekly? If you haven't it's not too late now, so come on Bing's Fans - Do your stuff!

P.S.-

In the Melody Maker Poll, our Star, Bing, attained 7th position.

EDITOR'S NOTE. Dot informs me that she has a good selection of Stills, Snaps, and Informal Pictures (9/8) of Bing. These she is willing to sell cheaply to help Club Funds. When writing please enclose a S.A.E. for list. Also, don't forget to make a note of Dot's new address, which is on Page 1 of this issue.

FEATURE STORY.

BING'S BIG YEAR

This is Bing Crosby's big year.

Now 50 years of age and in his 30th year in show-business, Bing has reached new heights as the world's most popular entertainer in several facets of the amusement business.

Paramount's "White Christmas" has played to over five million admissions in 300 theatres in Britain alone.

Bing's "The Country Girl", shown only in Los Angeles and New York in 1954, will soon be released in this country. Yet Bing's performance in this Perlberg-Seaton production for Paramount was so outstanding that he has been nominated for an Academy Award and many believe he will win the coveted "Oscar" as best actor in the final balloting now in progress.

Thus, in one year, Bing has scored both as a fine dramatic actor and as a top box-office star in his more familiar singing character.

Crosby was placed in the magic first ten of the principal money-making stars of the year selected by motion picture exhibitors in an annual poll conducted by a leading trade paper. He holds the all-time record in the Number One position in this poll, having led the list for five consecutive years, from 1944 to 1948. His selection this year is his twelfth consecutive year among the top ten and his fifteenth appearance during his career.

Bing was also sixth in the male star category in "The All-American Favourites of 1954", a poll made by another well-known trade paper of exhibitors, press and public film groups. This again was considered sensational since "White Christmas" was released so late in 1954. It was listed in the "pre-release" category at the time of the poll which means it had played comparatively few engagements at the time. He was leading male star in this poll for eight consecutive years, from 1944 to 1951.

An interesting sidelight is that many film critics in America picked "The Country Girl" in their lists of the "10 best pictures of the year" and said that Crosby was the year's best actor, although the picture had not yet been shown to the general public in their communities.

"White Christmas" is Bing's eighth picture to be included in one of the most famous trade papers' list of all-time top successes for the distributors in the U.S. and Canada. The others are: "The Bells of St. Mary's", 1946; "Going My Way", which won Bing an Academy Award in 1944; "Welcome Stranger", 1947; "Blue Skies", 1946; "Road to Rio", 1948; "Road to Utopia", 1945; and "The Emperor Waltz", 1948.

1954 was also a big year for Bing in the record business.

Decca's album, "Bing", which included songs reaching back to about 1926, has been a phenomenon of the record business. It plays for four hours and has sold nearly 100,000 copies, the most successful album of this sort at its price in history.

Another Crosby highlight of the year was Decca's "White Christmas" album from the sound track of the picture.

Crosby's individual record of "White Christmas" is the all-time champion in individual record sales, having come close to the astronomical ten million mark. It also had a big sale in 1954, encouraged by the release of the picture, as it has every year since Bing first recorded it about 12 years ago.

Bing has made 19 records during his career which have sold more than a million copies each, another all-time record in the business. The titles show the versatility and popularity of the man.

They are "White Christmas", "Silent Night", "Adeste Fideles", "Now is the Hour", "Swinging on a Star", "Sweet Leilani", "Blue Hawaii", "I Can't Begin to Tell You", "MacNamara's Band", "Galway Bay", "I'll Be Home For Christmas", "Dear Hearts and Gentle People", "New San Antonio Rose", "Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ra", "Jingle Bells" and "Santa Claus is Coming To Town", "Don't Fence Me In", "South America, Take It Away", "Pistol Packin' Mama", "The Whiffenpoof Song" and "Play a Simple Melody".

For a long time Bing has been a top radio entertainer, and now he has reached a new popularity in this field with the change of format of his five-times-a-week CBS show. It is a completely informal programme with Bing singing a couple of songs but also talking to his listeners informally about the weather, sports, books or anything that comes to his mind. This new type of show has won him high praise from critics, has brought him many new listeners and fans who enjoy his conversational observations as much as his songs.

Bing also took his first real step into television during the past year, presenting two filmed shows which were well received. He had previously appeared with his friend, Bob Hope, on an Olympic Games telethon and had made a guest appearance on another show. But this year he took

the plunge with his own programme and appeared on three other shows.

Crosby was also a prominent figure in the book publishing business in 1954, a follow-up to his initial success in the publishing field a year earlier. His autobiography, "Call Me Lucky", was published in subsequent editions in both clothbound and paper-back books and was a best-seller for many weeks. Earlier it had been published as an eight-part magazine serial, when, it is reported, it set all-time circulation records for a story about a show business personality. The magazine's circulation for the first instalment is said to have zoomed to 4,800,000 and to have stayed close to that figure for the other issues.

PART 2.

THE CROSBY WAXWORKS.

By Colin Pugh.

Many of you who didn't order your album of Bing's Autobiography immediately it's issue was announced, will only just recently have received your copy. Various theories have been put forward as to the cause of this most unusual hold-up, and I will give you three I have had passed on to me. Firstly, I have heard that after pressing a few, Decca had an accident or trouble of some description, with the masters, and had to send to America for a new set. Personally I didn't give much credence to this story, especially in view of the length of time before they were once more available because a cable to the States would have a new set here by air in a few hours, or five days at the outside even by water. Then a representative of one of the largest record manufacturers told me the delay was due to the fact that Decca was held up on delivery of the actual albums from the printers, and actually had the records all ready and waiting for these albums. I took this explanation with a pinch of salt because (a) I would think a Company the size of Decca would either have its own printing dept., or would demand the regular and constant services of a printing firm to handle their enormous printing requirements, and (b) it would be bad organisation to urge the public to buy while the albums lasted, when they hadn't even got the albums to distribute. No, I rather approve the latest explanation from a collector friend of mine who informs me that Decca only expected to sell 500 albums, whereas the initial orders amounted to 2,500. When one considers the price, this figure is rather staggering anyway, whatever the cause of the delay, those of you who now have the autobiography will agree it was well worth waiting for.

At the last time of my writing I was only able to announce the issue of 05385. "Tobermory Bay"/"The River", which was not then to hand. The first size is of course, a typical Irish song and I would say that except to an Irishman, they all sound pretty much alike. It perpetuates the theme of "Galway Bay" and "Isle of Innisfree". Here, it is very well sung by Bing, slowly and soothing in his mellow voice, making yet a further contribution to the splendid selection already available in the Irish idiom. "The River" on the reverse side is quite a divergence from the usual run of songs. I should say it was definitely territorial and in the absence of certain knowledge of such matters, I would hazard a guess it was American Indian. It's a bit of a dirge but I can quite understand it would appeal to certain people. Its different, descriptive and unusual, and I would imagine, a difficult piece to learn and sing. John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra provide the accompaniment on both sides of this disc.

Continuing with the 78s or 45s, according to which you buy, we next have four titles from Bing's latest film "The Country Girl". 05403 "It's Mine, It's Yours"/"Dissertation on the State of Bliss", and 05404 "The Land Around Us"/"The Search is Through". Generalising on these four, I cannot honestly say there is one that can be described as "exciting" or "new". Tame and insipid would be a more apt description but nevertheless do not misunderstand me. Whilst they are somewhat uninspired, one would be hard put to it to actually fault them, for all are pleasant and nicely sung. All are with Joseph J. Lilley and his Orchestra. "It's Mine, It's Yours" (I notice a sub-title below in brackets - "The Pitchman") is quite a cheerful little earful voicing the attributes of nature's wealth around us. The tune in parts reminds me of a "twist" on "There's a fellow waiting in Poughkeepsie". "Dissertation on the State of Bliss" (or for the higgerant' "Disquisition respecting the condition of Ecstasy"), also has a sub-title - "Love and Learn". Seeing that the words "Love and Learn" appear in practically every other line in the lyrics, its little wonder something else was chosen for the title. Patty Andrews joins Bing in this 'swingy' number. I had better club the next two sides together - "The Land Around Us" and "The Search is Through" - for about these two I'm afraid little can be said. No complaints about Bing's vocalising of course, but the material is extremely mediocre.

In my opinion, neither have got what it takes to become even a popular tune, let alone a top hit. "The Search is Through" means he has found his gal. "The Land Around Us" provides some idealistic town planning.

Every now and again, Bing comes up with a top Hit tune as he did recently with "Secret Love", "Changing Partners" and many others. Now, on 05410, he repeats this happy knack and gives us "Stranger in Paradise" from KISMET. Being at the top of the Hit Parade, it's only natural that this classic adaption has been waxed by a legion of orchestras and vocalists, but for a good straight rendering with no frills or flourishes, Bing's version accompanied by John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra is easily the best of the batch and actually sells as well as any. I should say it was his best recent recording. To match this splendid side, we have a first class backing in "Who Gave you the Roses", this time with the Jud Conlon Choir and Alfred Newman and his Orchestra. This is a waltz with quite a simple melody and simple words, but therein lies its charm. There seems to be a general trend today to revive this type of composition which we used to enjoy some 20 to 25 years ago.

That is all the discs I hand at present but another 78/45 issue is advised - 05419 - on which Bing sings two top numbers from "Wonderful Town" - "OHIO"/"A QUIET GIRL") to the accompaniment of John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra and Jud Conlon's Rhythmaïres. In addition to this there are a few LP's and EP's as follows: OE9010 gives us Volume 2 of "Some fine old Chestnuts" on EP (the second half of the full LP of this title). This has: Sleep Time Gal: Dinah; I Never Knew; I Can't Give you Anything But Love Baby. OE9103 (something a bit out of the ordinary and a good item for our collections: Bing Crosby (Narrator) "Peace Prayer Of Saint Francis" - "Blessing of Saint Francis" - "Text From Saint Francis" - "Plainchant From The Sequence of Saint Francis. Music by Reverend Owen da Silva, O.F.M. Arranged and conducted by Richard D. Aurandt. Reverend Noel F. Moholy O.F.M. Producer The Padre Choristers. Fr. Lorenzo Morales, O.F.M. Soloist. LA8714 The Country Girl; "It's Mine It's Yours"/"The search in Through"/"Love And Learn"/"The Land Around Us". LITTLE BOY LOST: "The Magic Window"/"A Propos de Rien"/"Cela M'est Egel"/"Violets and Violins".

This you will see includes the two 78/45's reviewed above, also the two titles we had a while back on 05203, but the other two titles from "LITTLE BOY LOST" are very welcome.

Philips- BBL 7013 - This is a 33 1/3rd. RPM 12 inch LP. costing 32/4½d. on this we get a re-issue of "OH MISS HANNAH" on which Bing appeared with Paul Whiteman on May 4th 1929. It's been issued at 78 in the States, Australia and here, but all are of course, long since deleted. Unfortunately this is the only item containing Bing on this LP.

COLUMBIA SEG 7533 - This is an EP record costing 9/3½d, on which we get a re-issue of "MISSISSIPPI MUD" with Frankie Trumbauer and his Orchestra. Bing does a duet with Trumbauer and the original recording was made on 20th January 1928, there have been about eight issues of this on 78's in different parts of the world, but for those without a copy, here is a chance at a fairly reasonable price.

When Irving Berlin's hit tune, "Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep" from the Paramount Vista Vision film, "White Christmas" won an Academy Award "Best Song" nomination, it became the 10th tune introduced by Bing Crosby in a film to have been chosen for the "Oscar" sweepstakes.

"Count Your Blessings", which has sold 750,000 discs on the Victor label alone, has been on the Hit Parade for 13 weeks.

Four of the 10 went the distance to win "Oscars". They were: "In the Cool, Cool of the Evening" from "Here Comes the Groom", 1951; "Swinging on a Star" from "Going My Way", 1944; "White Christmas" from "Holiday Inn", 1942, and "Sweet Leilani" from "Waikiki Wedding", 1937.

The others to receive nominations were: "Zing a Little Zong" from "Just For You," 1952; "You Keep Coming Back like a Song" from "Blue Skies", 1946; "Accentuate the Positive" from "Here Come the Waves", 1945; "Pennies From Heaven" from the picture of that title, 1936, and "Love In Bloom" from "She Loves Me Not", 1934, the first year songs were included in the Academy Awards.

AN 'X' IN THIS SPACE INDICATES THAT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS NOW DUE :-	
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And so until we meet again in June, it's Good Luck and Cheerio for the present from DOT, COLIN, and Yours truly, FRANK.